

INTERNSHIPS: What are they?

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM are a critical component of a college education. Internships provide a powerful mechanism for students to learn and for employers to guide and evaluate future talent. It's important that experiences labeled "internships" share some common features. Below you'll find information about the essential conditions for successful internships, based on guidelines produced by the National Association of Colleges & Employers.

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

INTERNSHIPS:

- > Are experiential learning opportunities that take place in **workplace environments**
- > Allow a student to do one or more of the following:
 - > **integrate academic learning** with practical or "hands-on" experience
 - > develop or refine specific professional **skills**
 - > explore a **career interest**
- > Typically last at least **one academic quarter**

HOW ARE INTERNSHIPS DIFFERENT THAN JOBS?

INTERNSHIPS:

- > Have an intentional and **significant focus on student learning**
- > Often center around **defined projects** with clear objectives, rather than routine unit operations
- > Have a **defined beginning and end**

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS?

AN INTERNSHIP MUST BE A LEARNING EXPERIENCE:

- > It must **not be simply to advance the operations of the employer** or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform
- > There are **clearly defined learning objectives/goals** related to the student's academic and/or professional goals
- > The knowledge or **skills learned must be transferable** to other employment settings
- > There is intentional **onboarding**, ongoing **supervision**, and frequent **feedback** by an experienced supervisor who models professional and ethical behavior

ADDITIONALLY:

- > An internship should have a **position description** with desired qualifications
- > The **resources, equipment, and facilities** necessary to support the learning goals should be provided by the employer